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IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1, 6, 10 and 12-16 and ADD claim 17 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An advertising method for distributing advertisements to user terminals on a network from an awareness device for managing user status, the advertising method comprising:
storing as a user status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser;
accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation;
and
distributing to a user terminal used by a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status via the network.
2. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
the symbol use request is accepted on a Web Page provided by the advertiser; and
the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for a user requesting use of the symbol on the Web Page.
3. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
a request to use the symbol is accepted from the secondary user receiving the symbol as the primary user's status; and
the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for the secondary user.
4. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
a request to use the symbol is accepted from the secondary user receiving the symbol as the primary user's status, and the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for the secondary user; and
the secondary user or advertiser is requested to pay a charge for using the symbol.

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5. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
the symbol representing the advertiser is stored with privileges the advertiser provides;
and

when the request by the primary user to use the symbol as a self-status designation is accepted, the primary user is notified of privileges provided by the advertiser the designated symbol represents.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
user-status symbol designation is accepted through a Web Page for the advertiser
~~whereon the Web Page providing privileges are provided for users;~~
setting the symbol as user status is reported from the user terminal or the advertiser, to the awareness device; and
the symbol is set by the awareness device as the user status.

7. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
the advertiser's symbol is stored with a referral count for the symbol during predetermined period; and
the advertiser is billed according to the referral count during the predetermined period.

8. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
incentives are offered to the primary user according to a count of referrals by the secondary user to the symbol set as the primary user's status, or according to a copy count of times the symbol is added to status-setting alternatives for the secondary user; and
coupons from advertisers are offered to users according to the referral count or to the copy count.

9. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:
purchasing information representing user purchase of the advertiser's items or services when purchased at an outlet is sent to an outlet terminal;
a predetermined process based on the purchasing information is performed at the outlet wherein the advertiser symbol and the user are reported from the user terminal or the outlet terminal to the awareness device; and
on receiving the report the awareness device sets as the reported user's status the

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symbol representing the reported advertiser.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

content operable or available for output on the user terminals is stored with a symbol representing the content in ~~any~~ at least one of the terminals on the network;

~~if~~ when a user selects any of the contents, the symbol representing the content and the user is reported to the awareness server from the at least one network terminal; and the awareness device sets as the user's status the symbol representing the content.

11. (ORIGINAL) An advertising method according to claim 1, wherein:

by storing the advertiser's symbol in a device installed in an outlet for the advertiser and wirelessly sending the symbol to a user terminal, the symbol of the advertiser is set as the user status when the user visits the outlet.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer-readable recording medium on which is recorded a program for an advertising method for distributing advertisements to user terminals on a network, the program being employed by an awareness device for managing user status, the program ~~for executing steps of~~ causing a computer to perform at least:

~~A:~~ storing as a user status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser;

~~B:~~ accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation; and

~~C:~~ distributing to a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An awareness server for managing user status, the awareness server communicatively connected to at least one user terminal via a network and comprising:

storing means storing as a user status-setting alternative a symbol representing an advertiser;

accepting means accepting from a primary user a request to use the symbol as a self-status designation; and

distributing means distributing to the at least one user terminal used by a secondary user the symbol representing the primary user's status via the network.

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14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A user status setting method used for an awareness service accepting information on user status via a network and storing the information, accepting request by a user via a network and ~~sends~~ sending information on another user, and enabling a requested user status to be referred to by request, comprising:
previously accepting a symbol including advertisement information from an advertiser as information for status setting of a user;
~~selectably~~ selectably presenting a symbol including advertisement information provided by the above-mentioned advertiser as information on a primary user status of a primary user;
setting a symbol including advertisement information selected by ~~a~~ the primary user as the primary user status; and
presenting ~~a~~ the symbol including advertisement information as the primary user's status information on a user terminal when a status reference request of ~~a~~ the primary user from a secondary user is accepted.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~A word of mouth~~ An advertising method using awareness services accepting and storing information on user status via a network, accepting a request of a user and sending information on ~~other users~~ another user via a network, and enabling a required user status to be referred to, wherein the method comprising:
accepting at a first time a symbol including advertisement information ~~is previously accepted as~~ information for user status setting from an advertiser;
selecting the above-mentioned stored symbol is selected and set setting the stored symbol as information of user status by ~~direction or act of~~ the user; and
presenting the above-mentioned symbol including the above-mentioned advertisement information is presented on a user terminal to ~~the~~ a primary user requesting reference as status information set for ~~the~~ a secondary user when a reference request of the secondary user's status ~~of~~ made by the primary user is accepted.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~A word of mouth~~ An advertising method using awareness services accepting and storing information on user status via a network, accepting a request of a user and sending information on ~~other users~~ another user via a network, and enabling a required user status to be referred to, wherein the method comprising:
accepting at a first time a symbol including advertisement information ~~is previously accepted and stored~~ storing the symbol including the advertisement information as an alternative of user status setting from an advertiser;

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~~selecting the above-mentioned symbol including the advertisement information provided by the advertiser is selected and set~~ setting the symbol including the advertisement information as information on status of ~~the above-mentioned~~ a primary user by ~~direction or act of the primary user;~~

presenting on a user terminal, when a reference request of the above-mentioned primary user is accepted from the a secondary user, ~~a~~ the symbol including the advertisement information is presented as status information set for the above-mentioned primary user; and

setting by the above-mentioned secondary user sets the presented symbol including the advertisement information as a self status.

17. (NEW) An awareness device for managing user status and distributing advertisements, the awareness device communicatively connected to at least one user terminal on a network and comprising:

a storage unit which stores a user status corresponding to a primary user and a destination list including information regarding a destination to which the user status is distributed;

an update unit which receives an update of the user status via the network and updates the stored user status, the updated stored user status including a symbol representing an advertiser based on the received update; and

a notification unit which notifies the destination when the stored user status is updated, wherein the at least one user terminal obtains the stored user status from the awareness device when the destination includes a secondary user of the at least one user terminal.